

This record is a partial extract of the original cable. The full text of the original cable is not available.

C O N F I D E N T I A L PARIS 008605

SIPDIS

KINSHASA/BRAZZAVILLE FOR BIEDLINGMAIER

E.O. 12958: DECL: 12/21/2015

TAGS: [PREL](#) [PINR](#) [PHUM](#) [CF](#) [SU](#) [AU](#) [FR](#)

SUBJECT: FRENCH HOPEFUL ON ALTERNATIVE TO SUDANESE AU
PRESIDENCY

REF: A. STATE 226663 B. PARIS 8376

Classified By: Acting POL Bruce Turner. Reasons 1.4b,d

1. (C) MFA Sudan Desk Officer Jeremie Robert confirmed to Africa Watcher that France remains hopeful that a Congo-Brazzaville candidacy may avert the fiasco of a possible Sudanese African Union (AU) Presidency after the January 2006 summit in Khartoum. Chirac's Africa Adviser Michel de Bonnacorse had mentioned the prospect of an interim Congo-Brazzaville AU Presidency during a 6 December conversation with Africa Watcher (Ref B). A week later, Congo-Brazzaville Foreign Minister Adada visited Paris for consultations after Congo-Brazzaville's election to the UN Security Council. According to MFA Congo-Brazzaville/Gabon Desk Officer Francois Gautier, FM Adada expressed confidence that his country would emerge from the AU Summit as the 2006 AU president and he claimed that Sudan had agreed to stand down.

2. (C) Robert commented that the compromise candidacy of Congo-Brazzaville had added appeal because no Central African state had ever headed the AU. Moreover, Congo-Brazzaville President Denis Sassou-N'Guesso has taken pains to burnish his Africanist credentials, for instance through mediation efforts for Sao Tome on behalf of ECCAS (Economic Community of Central Africa States), as well as through various targeted publications. (Note: For instance, "African Geopolitics," a France-based journal with offices in Congo-Brazzaville, dedicated a special issue in 2005 to Sassou-N'Guesso's promulgation of a draft "Pan-African Pact Against Aggression" at the 2003 Maputo AU summit, apparently adopted by AU Heads of State at the 2005 Abuja AU summit. Sassou-N'Guesso, incidentally, is the honorary president of "African Geopolitics." End Note)

3. (C) Comment: While favorably inclined toward a Congo-Brazzaville AU presidency -- toward any alternative to Sudan, in fact -- France is taking pains to stay on the sidelines of this vexing African succession tale, if only because visible French support could prove counter-productive. Robert noted also that Sudan was not without its champions in the African Union, notably Egypt, a fierce advocate, he claimed, of Sudanese prerogatives as host of the 2006 AU summit. End Comment.

Please visit Paris' Classified Website at:
<http://www.state.sgov.gov/p/eur/paris/index.cfm>

Stapleton